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ABSTRACT

Designed for school personnel, the booklet suggests programing modes by which language arts may be organized to provide special learning activities for the gifted and talented (G/T) secondary school student. Among topics discussed in a series of 12 questions and answers are: identification of gifted and talented students; teaching objectives for this group; special needs of the group; types of language arts courses best suited to the needs of G/T students (including homogeneous grouping, special elective courses, enrichment in regular classes, advanced placement, extracurricular activities, and multidisciplinary programs); desirable teacher characteristics; suggestions for fostering creativity; finance (including suggestions for money making activities); and 19 suggestions for language arts activities (such as developing a dictionary of words and meanings and pronounciations particular to the region). A list of 16 reccmmended readings is appended. (PHR)

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LANGUAGE ARTS FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

I. Introduction

The ultimate and ideal goal of our public educational system is to provide every student with the emotional, physical, social, and intellectual development which is commensurate with his needs and abilities. As educators we are all too aware, however, of the pressures and conflicts which prevent us from reaching that goal. From time to time, therefore, we evaluate our progress toward that goal and find that we are falling short in one way or another--in providing for emotional development, in providing for intellectual development, in meeting the needs of the "average" student, and so forth. When we realize that we have been slighting any given area, we immediately begin to concentrate our efforts on attempts to compensate for that weakness, perhaps only to discover some time later, that our efforts to compensate for weakness in one area have led us to weakness in another area. To some extent this publication is an attempt to concentrate some of our efforts on an area that has perhaps been neglected as we have concentrated on other weak links within our educational system. Although we have not been very adept at balancing all segments of the educational process in the past, hopefully we will be able to give some special attention to language arts education for the gifted and talented without reducing the quality of education to other students.

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Recommended for: school personnel.

Suggests programming modes by which language arts may be organized to provide special learning activities for the gifted and talented (e.g. homogenous grouping, special elective courses, advanced placement). Includes examples of courses and units of instruction. Deals with the learning needs of the gifted, learning objectives for the gifted funding of programs, and teacher development.

Order: free from Charles Whaley, State Consultant for Gifted and Talented Education, c/o publisher.

Funding: USOE grant.

This publication was made possible through a grant from the United States Office of Education to the Indiana Department of Public Instruction. That grant provided the expenses for approximately 75 English teachers to meet and to ask some questions, as well as to provide some answers to questions regarding language arts programs for the gifted and talented students in our schools. The focus of their discussion and of this publication was the secondary school program, although some of the questions and answers would also apply to the elementary programs.

The English teachers met in five area meetings in the state of Indiana during the summer of 1977. During the workshops the teachers raised questions and provided some answers, discussed problems and possible solutions, and outlined courses and activities for gifted and talented students. This small document does not, of course, contain all that they accomplished during those five meetings, but it does represent their most dominant concerns and beliefs. The body of this publication is organized around the questions which the teachers had raised at the beginning of the workshops. The responses are, for the most part, the responses which were developed in the workshops themselves.

II. Questions and Answers

1. WHO ARE THE GIFTED AND TALENTED?

Some experts in the field of gifted and talented education estimate that from 3 to 6 percent of the nation's population is intellectually gifted, meaning that they have

a score of 130 or above on the Stanford Binet.[1] Such authorities usually use the term "talented" to refer to that group that is slightly below the gifted, the upper 10 to 15 percent of the population. Other educators, however, including most of the teachers who helped to develop the information for this publication, would expand that definition of the gifted and talented beyond the intellectually gifted and talented to the socially gifted and talented, the artistically gifted and talented, the physically gifted and talented, and the mechanically gifted and talented.

The gifted and talented student most typically has well above average abilities in almost every aspect of human development and will perform exceptionally in at least one area of endeavor. The gifted and talented student is usually curious; highly motivated, but not necessarily academically motivated; innovative and creative; a divergent thinker; self-confident; task-oriented; independent; and open-minded. Contrary to much popular opinion, the majority of the extremely gifted are socially well-adjusted and, in fact, exhibit strong leadership qualities.

2. HOW DO WE IDENTIFY THE GIFTED AND TALENTED?

The most frequently used method of identification of the gifted and talented student is the standardized intelligence test, but most educators would agree that many other indicators of giftedness are equally valid and should also be used.

1. S.P. Marland, Jr. Education of the Gifted and Talented: Report of the Congress of the United States by the US Commissioner of Education. Washington, D.C.: US Office of Education, 1971, P. 14.

Another method frequently used to identify the gifted and talented is grades in school, but that method is only effective if the teachers are knowledgeable regarding the non-academic characteristics of such students. Since counselors frequently have opportunities to talk with students about their special interests and to examine a variety of test scores, their recommendations should also be considered. In addition, parents frequently are aware of special characteristics of their children and may be able to furnish the school with pertinent observations regarding the behavior and abilities of their children. This is especially true if the teacher/school representative knows the correct questions to ask in order to develop appropriate information. Such a set of questions or description of pertinent behaviors should probably be prepared in advance of any parent interview.

The language arts teacher, in particular, has the opportunity, and should take advantage of that opportunity, to observe behavior which might be characteristic of the gifted and talented student. Since one characteristic of the gifted and talented may be an avid interest in some hobby, topic, sport, etc., the English teacher has an excellent opportunity to note such interests in student writing, speech topics, and special projects. The teacher also has an opportunity to observe creative thinking patterns which may show up in such student activities. The teacher should give careful attention to the student who seems extremely bored and unmotivated but able, for that student may be the one who has superior abilities. The teacher should also be aware of students with

broad curricular and extra-curricular involvements, as well as those who intently explore a single interest.

3. WHAT ARE THE SCHOOL'S OBJECTIVES FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENT?

The objectives which our society desires for its gifted and talented vary somewhat from generation to generation. Typically we, as a society, selfishly want the gifted and talented to contribute whatever skills and abilities are in greatest need at a particular time. Thus, during war years, we may want them to develop military genius or to be inventors and scientists in the area of war technology; during periods of economic crisis we may want them to become economists or businessmen; during periods of prosperity and peace, we may want them to become social planners or great artists; and so forth. This is not denying that any society needs its gifted and talented as resources for development. As educators, however, we must be concerned that the gifted and talented are not sacrificed for society and that they are allowed to develop lives that are personally fulfilling as well as fruitful to society. Although nearly all of the objectives that apply to the general student population also apply to the gifted and talented student, the objectives listed below focus specifically on the gifted and talented student.

> The gifted and talented student will understand and accept his own abilities in relation to the abilities of others.
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> The gifted and talented student will understand, accept, and be tolerant of those with lesser abilities.
>
> The gifted and talented student will be motivated to develop his own talents and abilities to their greatest potential.

The gifted and talented student will find personal fulfillment in the use of his own talents and gifts.

The gifted and talented student will be motivated to utilize his gifts and talents in ways that will be beneficial to society.

These objectives are general and do not apply to the discipline of language arts any more than they do to any other discipline, but the language arts teacher does have a responsibility for these general objectives. In addition, the language arts teacher has the following general "language arts" objectives for the gifted and talented student.

The gifted and talented student will recognize the need to and will develop his abilities to communicate effectively, both socially and professionally. (This objective falls within the realm of basic communication skills and would be applicable no matter what the specific gift or talent of the student).

The gifted and talented student whose superior abilities are language related will recognize that ability and pursue excellence within the range of his/her ability.

4. WHAT ARE THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF THE GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENT?

In general, the gifted and talented students need to become aware of their own potential. More specifically, however, they need an educational program which will motivate them, encourage them, stimulate them, and challenge them to further growth. At the same time, the educational program must allow the gifted and talented students the freedom to find their own level and mode of learning. They may need to learn independently and to pursue their own individual interests. They may need additional outlets/activities for their intellectual and/or creative energy and they may need a variety of approaches to learning and a more flexible

schedule during the class hour or school day. They may need basic skill development in some areas, but be far ahead of their classmates in other areas. They will probably need access to a wide range of resources, both human and material, which will enable them to seek answers to their own questions.

Socially, gifted and talented students may have other needs. They may need to feel a part of a group and not feel too strange or different. They may need to realize that their abilities are of value but that the different abilities of other people are also of value. They may need to understand that a human being can learn and benefit from a variety of social relationships, and that they have something to offer as well as to gain within such relationships.

5. WHAT KINDS OF LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAMS AND TEACHING STRATEGIES CAN WE DEVELOP IN ORDER TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THESE STUDENTS?

There are several methods by which language arts programs may be organized in order to provide special learning opportunities for the gifted and talented. The most commonly used are the following:

Homogeneous grouping. Homogeneous grouping usually means that students are segregated by ability for all of their educational experiences. We frequently call this ability grouping or tracking, and it usually means that students will spend all of their time with students who are at a similar intellectual level and academic achievement level. Some advantages of such grouping for the gifted and talented students are that they may be stimulated by their peers, they may be challenged by special learning activities, and the teacher may be free to

concentrate on the special needs of such students. There are also several disadvantages, however. Only a large school would be able to develop a complete track or level for such a small (less than 15%) percentage of the students. The grouping would then be imperfect and some students would still be unchallenged and others would be pushed too hard. In addition, such isolation from students of other abilities and interests may lead to elitism and a narrowness of understanding on the part of the gifted and talented students, as well as resentment and envy on the part of students of lesser ability. Constant homogeneous grouping also prevents the gifted and talented from learning to cope with and relate to people of lesser ability, a skill which they will need in order to function successfully in their adult lives. Likewise, the students of lesser ability do not learn to relate to people of greater ability, nor do they receive the added creative and intellectual stimulation that the gifted and talented students may bring to classroom discussion and activities.

Special elective courses organized for gifted students. One method of providing for gifted and talented students is to offer special elective courses which they may take over and above their regular English classes. A major handicap of such courses is that they are expensive; a school must have a relatively large student body or have strong financal backing in order to provide teacher time for such courses. Another disadvantage is that although such courses provide enrichment beyond those of the normal mainstream classrooms, they do

nothing to prevent gifted and talented students from becoming bored and unmotivated within their regular classes. A third problem with such courses is that they may not do anything to eliminate gaps in the student's learning or to stimulate their interests in areas not specifically covered by the courses. A major advantage is that they allow the English teacher to stimulate the students with more demanding activities and to concentrate his/her efforts on meeting the needs of that particular type of student. These courses also provide an opportunity to concentrate on the special interests and abilities of the students. For example, they may focus on fiction, on the study of Shakespeare, on the study of linguistic theory, on radio and TV production, etc.

Enrichment in regular classes. Another method of providing a program which will meet the needs of the gifted and talented students is to provide special opportunities and experiences for them within the regular classroom. The obvious disadvantage of such an enrichment program is that the teacher must find extra time to develop and evaluate learning experiences for these students. Another disadvantage may be that the gifted and talented students may be bored by those experiences which they must share with the other students and/or they may become resentful of the fact that they frequently are asked to do more than the other students. Advantages of such a program include the fact that it is usually less expensive in terms of dollars spent for instructional time because class size is not affected.

An educational advantage occurs for both the gifted and talented students and the other students, as well. The other students can receive intellectual and creative stimulation from the presence of the gifted and talented, and the gifted and talented students often have areas of lesser competence in which they can learn from their classmates. As has been mentioned earlier, there is also a social advantage in mixing the two groups of students together so that they will be able to develop an understanding of people who are not just like themselves.

Placement in advanced grades or classes, including college classes. Another method which is sometimes used to offer programs for the gifted and talented is to move them ahead chronologically by allowing them to skip a grade or take classes at the next grade level. In some schools, Advanced Placement is a formal program through which high school students may earn college credit while they are still in school. A disadvantage of such a program for gifted and talented students is that it assumes that they are equally advanced in all areas of development--physical, intellectual, emotional, and social. It also assumes that the gifted and talented student's intellectual achievement is ahead of those of his chronological peers by a complete course/class/grade level, with no provision for missing links. It does, however, provide opportunities to challenge gifted students and to allow them to move ahead to new learning experiences. In the case of advanced placement into college classes, it allows the students to eliminate some of their basic college requirements while they are still in high school.

Special activities outside the classroom and/or school. Schools can sometimes offer gifted and talented students opportunities to participate in special activities that occur outside the regular curriculum. Such activities may include correspondence courses from other institutions, independent study projects, internships and apprenticeships, and so forth. The major disadvantage of such activities is that they do little to improve the learning experiences within the regular school program. However, such activities provide excellent opportunities for the gifted and talented students to explore their own interests and to develop their own special abilities.

Multi-disciplinary programs. Special multi-disciplinary programs may be incorporated into any of the structures discussed above, or they may be developed as an entirely different type of program. The focus, of course, of any multi-disciplinary program is on the relationships between and among various disciplines. Such programs are frequently suggested for gifted and talented students because they can utilize their abilities in one area to explore another area. The gifted and talented are also frequently capable of, and eager to, examine large issues, discover relationships, and synthesize ideas--all processes which may easily be provided in a multi-disciplinary approach. A handicap, of course, is that the multi-disciplinary course usually does not provide the basic skills within each separate discipline. Another problem is that multi-disciplinary instruction requires special teacher skills and time arrangements that may be difficult for the school to provide.

The above discussion of specific types of programs indicates that all such organizational structures have both strengths and weaknesses. One may work better in one school with one group of students and another may work better in another school with another group of students. As more and more such programs are evaluated, however, a consensus is developing that some combination of mainstreaming and separation works best with most gifted and talented students in most schools.

6. WHAT DO WE DO ABOUT BASIC SKILLS IN LANGUAGE ARTS FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENT?

Although the gifted and talented may be unique in many ways, they will, many times be lacking in some of the basic communication skills and they have as much need of those skills as students of lesser ability. For example, it is possible that such a student may have obvious potential as a poet, but may need considerable help in following written instructions or in making an oral presentation. For the students whose gifts or talents are in another academic area or in a non-academic area, the English teacher also has the obligation of providing the communication skills which will enable them to operate effectively within our society. In the case of these students, the English teacher will probably want to relate the communication skills as closely as possible to those abilities the student already has. For example, if the student is an outstanding visual artist, the teacher can allow him/her to give oral presentations or write papers on topics related to art and to use artwork to support those presentations and papers. The teacher should also help the student to see the connections between such factors as the use of organization of detail or supporting elements in both the

visual arts and the communication arts.

7. WHAT ARE THE SKILLS OR CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE TEACHER OF THE GIFTED AND TALENTED?

The language arts teachers, who worked on this project, almost unanimously agreed that the most important characteristics of a teacher of the gifted and talented is that he/she must have a strong self concept in order to cope with the fact that the gifted and talented students may well be more intelligent and have greater abilities than the teacher. The teacher must also be willing to encourage the students to continue their development even when the development takes them beyond that of the teacher. The teacher must also be sensitive to the special needs of these students and be able to develop learning activities that apply to the independent learners. The teacher would need to be able to function as a facilitator, a guide, and a resource person. The teacher must also, of course, have depth of preparation in language arts, but should not feel that he/she is an expert in the field.

Some of these skills and characteristics are innate and some are learned. However, even the teacher who has an appropriate personality and an appropriate general educational background may need additional preparation in the area of education for the gifted and talented. He/she will need to know something about the peculiar psychological and social development of these students and of the most appropriate teaching strategies. It would be to the benefit of both the students and the school if the teacher were given some extra time for special preparation.

8. WHAT CAN LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHERS DO TO FOSTER THE CREATIVITY OF THE GIFTED AND TALENTED AS WELL AS THE INTELLECT?

Research indicates that there is frequently a correlation between high intellect and creativity; and as language arts teachers, we are interested in the creative process as well as the intellectual process. Since the communication arts and skills lend themselves to creative endeavors, there are many things that the English teacher can do within his/her classroom to foster creativity. Among those projects and activities suggested by the English teachers attending the workshops were the following:

1. Provide the gifted and talented with an audience.
    a. Give them opportunities to perform for classmates and for other groups.
    b. Give them opportunities to write and have their work read by other classmates, younger children, community groups, etc.
2. Provide the gifted and talented with leadership opportunities.
    a. Let them direct dramatic activities and organize classroom publications.
    b. Let them develop learning units for the class on special topics which interest them.
    c. Let them arrange special activities such as field trips, speakers, etc. for the class.
3. Provide them with the opportunity to respond creatively to assignments.
    a. Allow them a choice of media to communicate their ideas, such as visual arts, music, dramatic or oral presentations, written forms, dance, etc.
    b. Allow them a choice of topics and/or encourage their work in special interest areas.
4. Limit the amount of time spent on drill, on highly structured activities, etc.
5. Let them pursue their own interests through independent study projects.
6. Listen to the student's ideas.

7. Allow students to be creative by providing flexibility in meeting deadlines.

9. HOW CAN WE CONVINCE THE PUBLIC THAT ATTENTION AND FUNDING SHOULD BE GIVEN TO EDUCATION FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED?

There are times, of course, when the general public and the local communities are highly aware that such attention is needed; but there are also times when the educator must explain the problem. There are two basic concepts which the local community must grasp regarding such educational programming: (1) gifted and talented students are individuals with special needs, just as are remedial students or average students, etc., and the school has an obligation to meet the needs of all individual students, and (2) our society must have the benefits of the talents and gifts of these people if we are to build a better world. In a practical sense, some way must be found to communicate these two ideas to the public, and the English teachers who attended the workshops suggested the following types of strategies:

1. Speak before parent organizations.
2. Provide articles for the local newspapers from teachers, parents, and students.
3. Speak before local service clubs, civic organizations, social organizations, religious groups, and business groups.
4. Form a speaker's bureau of teachers, students, and parents and advertise availability of services.
5. Develop a tutoring service allowing the gifted and talented students to tutor other students.
6. Invite representatives of community groups to school for special projects, exhibits, films, performances, which have been developed by gifted and talented students.
7. Develop special programs for local radio broadcasts: parent discussions, interviews, dramatizations,

musical performances, poetry readings, etc.

8. Set up exhibits of student work in shopping areas.

9. Bring back successful gifted and talented graduates to talk to school, parent, and community groups about needs of the gifted and talented.

10. Develop a brochure and/or a format for an oral presentation which contains pertinent facts, i.e., number of students, cost per student, and arguments in favor of such programs.

11. Sell the benefit, not the bare products, to the community. Let the community know what the advantages are for them.

12. In developing news releases, tailor the format to the medium--written news and feature stories for newspapers and magazines, brief script-type releases for radio, and news scripts with visual elements for TV.

13. Know your audience and design the presentation and precise content of your message with that audience in mind.

10. HOW CAN WE FINANCE A PROGRAM FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED?

Unfortunately, improved educational opportunities for any group of students requires more resources. Such resources include additional teacher time and additional print and audio-visual materials, all of which require financial support. Our group of English teachers had several ideas for raising money to support educational programs for gifted and talented students and some of those ideas are listed below:

1. Include requests for special programs in negotiations packages.

2. Investigate the possibility of federal funding.

3. Investigate the possibility of funding from private foundations such as Eli Lilly, Ford, not private foundations such as State Arts Commission, etc.

4. Seek community volunteers to organize and run special projects, for gifted and talented students.

5. Investigate the possibility of a cooperative program between your school and a college or university.

6. Develop special money-making projects such as:

   a. selling literary magazines, student films, student slide/tape presentations, etc.
   b. selling ads in special student publications or sponsor time in student productions
   c. developing a talent show and charging admission
   d. developing an "Adopt-a-scholar" program and encouraging community groups to support an individual student's activities
   e. providing a paperback book sale/exchange for the community
   f. sponsoring walk-a-thons, dance-a-thons, bike-a-thons, etc.
   g. developing a special exhibit of student work and requesting donations from visitors to the exhibit
   h. developing an internship/apprenticeship program and encouraging organizations or businesses to support learning activities of the intern/apprentice and/or the gifted and
   i. conducting a Chataqua
   j. encouraging gifted and talented students to develop and sell a regional dictionary
   k. encouraging students to do special projects on local folklore and solicit community donations for such projects
   l. sponsoring an old English dinner, a Madrigal dinner, a dinner theatre, and selling tickets.

A few comments should be made concerning this list. First, these are only a few suggestions to start the thinking process. They do not form an exhaustive list, nor are they all appropriate for every school and every community. Second, all such activities should be at least, in part, developed and supported by the gifted and talented students themselves. Finally, any teacher should obtain administrative and school board approval before initiating any of these activities.

11. WHAT TYPES OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES CAN THE HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHER DEVELOP WHICH WOULD BE BENEFICIAL AND APPROPRIATE FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED?

The English teachers who attended the workshops on education for the gifted and talented spent some time exploring possible courses and units of instruction for the gifted and talented, as well as specific activities and projects designed for such

students. For inclusion in this publication, some sample projects/activities have been selected which might be appropriate for gifted and talented students at the high school level. Those suggested projects/activities are listed below.

In a group or as individuals, students might do the following:

a. Read and analyze books or stories designed for young children. Select an age-group for children and prepare a list of 10-30 such books or stories which would be suitable for them. Then write a story or book that would also appeal to children of that age. Illustrate their book if they wish and share it with the children. Develop a written or an oral report discussing the children's reactions to the book or story.

b. Develop a dictionary of words and meanings and pronunciations that are peculiar to the dialect of the local community. If they wish, advertise it and distribute it to interested parties.

c. Study a collection of nursery rhymes and then write some of their own that would be more appropriate to children today. Read them to some children to see if they like them.

d. Create an imaginary politician and a political campaign for him. Develop a platform for which the candidate will stand. Write slogans and create designs for campaign buttons. Write speeches, including an innaugural for use after he is elected. They may also wish to develop a slide-tape of film to use in the promotion of their candidate.

e. Conduct research into the history of the Madrigal dinner and plan and conduct their own dinner. This includes making costumes and decorations, planning the menu and cooking, planning the entertainment and performing, advertising the dinner, handling financial arrangements for the dinner, and determining what should be done with any profits which may be derived from the dinner.

f. Conduct research into the background of the miracle and morality plays. Write a "new" miracle or morality play. They may also wish to produce the play before an audience. They should select the audience which would be most appropriate for the play.

g. Conduct investigative research into the history of a local church. Present that information in oral, written and/or visual form to classmates. Contact representatives of the church to determine whether or not the church would be interested in the presentation.

h. Write and produce a documentary film on a topic of local interest within the community. Topics could include sports and recreational activities, conditions in a local hospital or nursing home, law enforcement activities, etc.

i. Develop a description of their areas of expertise (i.e., fractions, spelling, reading, etc.) in some distributable form. Indicate their availability for tutoring. Distribute to students at a lower grade level and provide tutoring to those who seek it.

j. Develop a public relations campaign for their school. This would include the development of brochures, news releases and other promotion pieces. It might also include developing contacts with the various media in order to secure release of information about the school. They then might want to contact the schools administrators to see if they would be interested in using their promotional work.

k. Form a group to develop a Reader's Theatre. Promote their activities to local groups and organizations and perform for them when invited.

l. Write some poetry, short stories or essays (or use some they have already written) on a topic of their choice. Define an audience for whom this work would be relevant and seek publication for that audience. A student who does illustrations and/or one who knows something about printing might help print the book. Or they might contact a professional publisher. Other students who have talent in the area of advertising and sales might develop a marketing campaign for their book.

m. Write a unit of study for students their own age or younger on the topic of their choice. The unit would include a list of the skills or concepts which will be appropriate for the learning experience, and any tests which would be required. After they have developed their unit, they should show it to a teacher who might be interested in using it.

n. Develop a filmstrip or slide-show which illustrates the cultural and aesthetic appeal of the local art museum, cultural center, etc.

o. Identify a product for which they think current advertising is not adequate. Develop an advertising campaign--TV commercials, slogans, newspaper ads, etc.--which they think would be more successful. Send it to the company which produces the product for their consideration.

p. Follow a court case from beginning to end and develop a report which evaluates the investigation, the courtroom trial, and the court decision, as well as any coverage by the media.

q. Do a study of a particular film--the western, the musical, the mystery, etc. Prepare a written or oral report to be presented to the rest of the class and/or to a local film club.

r. Develop a description of life in the year 2500--include economic, social, political, and technological projections. Also develop a rational which explains why they think their projections are accurate.

s. Identify one of their favorite authors and study his/her life. Identify at least five elements of his/her writing style and then write a piece in which they attempt to use those elements also.

12. WHERE DOES THE CONCERNED ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHER GO FROM HERE?

Although it would be impossible to develop a description of the ideal language arts curriculum for gifted and talented students in a short paper such as this, hopefully what has been said here can provide a starting point for English teachers to develop such curriculum designs in their own schools. The English teachers who worked on this project came to a concensus that any English language arts topic is suitable for gifted and talented students, as long as it is approached at a level which challenges them, and as long as it can be used to stimulate further interest. The ideal curriculum would include opportunities for the gifted and talented to develop all the basic communication skills which they will need as adults in our society, to use their minds creatively, to

develop their abilities in a given area of interest, to explore the discipline of English language arts, and to extend their own minds beyond their previous limits.

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